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Data quality of collocated portable broadband seismometers using direct burial and vault emplacement

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16	
17	Electronic Supplement:
18	The supplementary material for this paper contains figures of the daily median noise levels in the
19	microseism band, monthly probability density functions for the magnitude squared coherence
20	between the six station couplings [Direct Burial 1 to Direct Burial 2, Vault 1 to Direct Burial 1,
21	Vault 1 to Direct Burial 2, Vault 1 to Vault 2, Vault 2 to Direct Burial 1, Vault 2 to Direct Burial
22	2] for all three components [BHE, BHN, BHZ], results of the coherency self-noise analysis, and
23	the recordings of the teleseismic and local earthquakes used for the signal-to-noise analysis.

24 Abstract

25 Temporary broadband sensor deployments have traditionally been predominantly emplaced 26 using shallow vaults that require more materials, personnel, and time than direct burial. 27 However, new developments in seismometer and seismograph technology are increasingly 28 facilitating systems that can be directly buried in earth or snow without vault enclosures. We 29 analyze data from two identical shallow vaults installed adjacent to two identical direct burial 30 sites in soft flood plain alluvial and shallow water table conditions near Socorro, New Mexico. 31 Data recorded from these four sensors over eight months in 2012 were assessed to determine if 32 the emplacement type had a significant and systematic effect on data quality. We used metrics 33 derived from power spectral density analysis to examine temporal trends in noise [instrument, 34 installation, and site noise], signal-to-noise ratio for teleseismic and local earthquakes, and 35 magnitude squared coherence of both noise and earthquake signal recordings. We found that 36 noise on the vault sensors is higher during the transition from spring to summer than for the 37 direct burial sensors. This difference is especially evident on the horizontal components at long 38 periods between 20-170 seconds with an average of 5.3 dB more noise on the vaults than the 39 direct burials from April to June, indicating enhanced tilt susceptibility for vault emplaced 40 sensors. However, most variability in data quality is comparable between sensors with differing emplacement methods and between sensors with the same emplacement method in this four-41 42 station experiment. We conclude that the direct burial emplaced sensors at this test site 43 performed as well as the vault emplaced sensors, and that direct burial is preferable when considering data quality and ease of installation. 44

45

47 Introduction

48 Temporary broadband seismic deployments have been driving advancements in seismological 49 investigation into seismic sources and earth structure for decades (e.g., Aster et al., 2005). The 50 emplacement method of choice for temporary broadband deployments has overwhelmingly been 51 a shallow vault-style design, where a hole that is substantially larger than the seismometer is 52 excavated to accommodate bulky installation materials. The vault is designed to protect the 53 sensor from the elements, insulate it from temperature and surface noise, and to couple the 54 sensor stably with the ground (Trnkoczy et al., 2002). Vault-style sensor emplacement often 55 requires significant manpower, installation times of hours to days, and materials that cost 56 hundreds of dollars or more per site. Direct burial emplacement, in contrast, requires an augered 57 or otherwise excavated hole that is only slightly larger than the instrument itself and 58 approximately one hour or less to install a station, while utilizing a fraction of the manpower, 59 tools, and materials. To assess if direct burial is a feasible cost- and time-attractive emplacement 60 alternative to vaults while not compromising data quality, we present a quantitative comparison 61 between data recorded by co-located sensors using the two emplacement types. Four identical 62 broadband sensors were installed in two identical shallow vaults and two identical direct burial 63 sites in close proximity at an alluvial high soil moisture location near Socorro, New Mexico. Eight months of data recorded during 2012 from these four sensors were intercompared to 64 65 determine any systematic quality differences using metrics derived from power spectral density 66 analysis, signal-to-noise ratios, and magnitude squared coherence. These data quality metrics 67 were also monitored with time, given that sudden but inevitable seasonal changes such as freeze-68 thaw, soil moisture levels, and high winds are likely to have different effects on sensors installed 69 in different emplacement conditions.

70 Site Selection

71 The installation location [33.96°N, 106.85°W] is a "soft" site characterized by ~1.2 meters of 72 recent mud and silt floodplain deposits overlying deeper alluvial fill of the central Rio Grande 73 rift (Cather, 2002). This area is prone to flooding from the river and from adjacent arroyos, and 74 the water table is shallow, varying from many centimeters to several meters deep, depending on 75 the season. Sources of local seismographic noise are likely to include wind, variations in 76 precipitation and soil moisture, temperature cycles, nearby riparian (cottonwood and tamarisk) 77 vegetation, a natural gas pipeline within 2 km, as well as seismic and tilt coupling from 78 vegetation and grazing cattle that may sporadically come within meters of the site (Anderson et 79 al., 2012). Two Program for Array Seismic Studies of the Continental Lithosphere (PASSCAL)-80 style shallow vaults and two direct burial deployments were co-located within a 4 m-square area, 81 Figure 1a-b. All deployments used Güralp CMG-3T sensors with a long-period corner frequency 82 of 120 s and a gain of 1500 V/m/s. CMG-3Ts are not designed for direct burial, but the two 83 directly buried sensors in this experiment were retrofitted with waterproof cable connectors and 84 cables. Data were collected on two 6-channel Quanterra Q330 digitizers with 1 Hz and 40 Hz 85 sampling and telemetered to the nearby PASSCAL Instrument Center at New Mexico Tech in 86 Socorro. Data were subsequently archived at the Incorporated Research Institutions for 87 Seismology (IRIS) Data Management Center under the YE temporary network code. The site 88 was powered with four 65-W solar panels and two 100-A-Hr lead acid batteries contained, along 89 with the dataloggers, charge controllers and cell modem, in a very small aperture terminal 90 (VSAT) box sited next to the sensors. A posthole sensor was also installed within the site during 91 the study, but recordings from this station are not analyzed here.

92 The PASSCAL-style shallow vaults (Figure 1a) consisted of concentric plastic barrels: an 93 inner 15-gallon with an open bottom for housing the sensor and an outer 55-gallon with a locking 94 lid. Both barrels were installed in the ground over a 20 cm high cement pier with open-cell foam 95 and styrofoam disks for thermal insulation and air circulation buffering. The direct burial 96 emplaced sensors were contained in a heavy plastic bag and installed on top of 5 cm of 97 compacted all-purpose sand with fine sand gently tamped around the sensor. The plastic bag 98 covering the direct burial sensors was later removed after it was deemed not necessary for 99 protection. Additional dirt was mounded on top of the sensor installations to provide further 100 insulation and thermal mass to minimize temperature fluctuations. The installation was then 101 covered with a tarp for protection from rain. The vault and the direct burial sensors were both 102 situated at a depth of about 1 m from the top of the mounded dirt to the sensor base. Sensor 103 specifications are reported in Table 1.

104 Data Return

105 There were two sensor failures that occurred during this study, with Direct Burial 2 (Table 1) 106 performing poorly beginning on 22 September 2012, and continuing through November, as well 107 as a failure with the BHE component of Direct Burial 1 on 18 November 2012. A conclusive 108 reason for the failure of the direct burial sensors during this study could not be determined. 109 though both instruments failed most significantly on the BHE component. Lightning strikes were 110 investigated as a possible cause, however there were no storm cells or lightning strikes reported within three days of either failure (U.S. National Lightning Detection NetworkTM and NEXRAD. 111 112 accessed 8 April 2014). A compromised power source may be the cause of a failure. Data 113 recorded during the eight-month period from 1 January 2012 to 31 August 2012, excluding a

telemetry gap on 17 January 2012, was chosen for the analysis to utilize periods of time when allsensors were functioning properly.

116

117 Data Quality Analysis

Eight months of data from January to August 2012 recorded on all four emplaced sensors were compared to determine if the two emplacement methods showed a systematic effect on data quality. To do this we calculated power spectral density, signal-to-noise ratio for teleseismic and local earthquakes, coherence of the sensors for both noise and earthquake signal recordings, and also monitored and accounted for any discrepancies in data return. This analysis was focused on assessing use of such data in research, as well as examining relevant temporal trends in data quality at scales from seconds to seasons.

125 *Power Spectral Density*

126 To characterize seismic noise levels, we used the method of McNamara et al. (2009) to compare 127 baseline data qualities through power spectral density (PSD) probability density function (PDF) 128 analysis. PSDs were calculated using POLX software (McNamara and Boaz, 2011) using 129 continuous one-hour time series segments of data overlapping by 50%, resulting in 48 PSDs per 130 day per sensor. The instrument response was deconvolved from the signal to allow comparison 131 of the calculated PSDs to the New Low Noise Model (NLNM) and New High Noise Model 132 (NHNM) (Peterson, 1993), baselines for seismic station performance that remain widely used 133 despite more recent proposed models (McNamara and Buland, 2004; Berger et al., 2004; 134 Castellaro and Mulargia, 2012). Earthquake and most other signals are highly sporadic, so 135 robust central tendency estimates for the background noise at a seismic station are best

characterized using the median of the PDFs at each frequency interval without resorting to eventculling.

138 Median PSD PDFs from eight months of data for each sensor are reported in Figure 2a. There was not a perceptible difference between the overall trends of the 10th and 90th percentiles 139 140 of the PDFs and the medians of the PDFs. The site may be generally characterized, relative to the 141 Peterson noise models, as being high noise at shorter periods. The high horizontal/vertical noise 142 ratio observed here is typical of shallow vaults (e.g., Anthony et al., 2015), and reflects the 143 coupling of local tilt into horizontal component signals (e.g., Wielandt and Frobriger, 1999). As 144 is often observed, long-period vertical site noise is more coherent than the long-period horizontal 145 site noise. The median PSD PDFs of all eight months of data show that the direct burial sites had 146 highly comparable noise levels to the vaults except for the horizontal components at long periods 147 $[15 \text{ s} \le T]$ where the east component of both of the direct burials had less noise than the vaults. 148 To highlight differences between the recorded noise levels more clearly, the mean was 149 taken of the four median PSDs of the direct burial and vault sensors for each respective 150 component at each frequency to calculate an average comparison PSD of all stations. The 151 difference between this all-station average PSD and the median PSD of each sensor was then 152 calculated at each frequency, with negative values showing a higher probability of less noise 153 power than the average and positive values showing a higher probability of more noise power 154 than the average (Figure 2b). This analysis shows that the predominant difference in noise level 155 is on the east component where the median power levels of both direct burial stations at periods 156 greater than 15 s are at least 2 dB lower than both vault stations. Between the highest noise vault 157 station and the lowest noise direct burial station on the east component this performance 158 difference grows to about 9 dB at 100 s. The north component does not show this effect, with

Direct Burial 1 performing similarly to the vault stations and only Direct Burial 2 having lower
noise. There is some separation in station performance at longer periods on the vertical
component, but all station medians stay within a 4 dB spread of each other at all periods. At
periods less than 10 s on all three components, all four stations stay within 1 dB of the ensemble
mean.

164 Temporal trends in background noise are also an important metric of consistent station 165 performance. Daily temperature cycles and weather patterns change strongly with the season in 166 central New Mexico, with winter months potentially bringing the effects of ground freeze and 167 thaw, spring months characterized by high winds, and summer months heralded by monsoon 168 rains. To explore how these seasonal changes affect the data quality of the differing 169 emplacement types at this site, median PSD PDFs were taken for each day and divided into three 170 useful period bands: short period [0.1-1 s], microseism [2-20 s], and long period [20-172 s]. 171 Dividing the result into separate frequency bands is valuable, as there is a strong frequency-172 dependence on sources of noise and the performance of these stations. These differing 173 bandwidths are also distinctly important to a variety of research applications. Median daily PSD 174 PDFs were interpolated, and the difference between the PSD and the NLNM was calculated at 175 each frequency from 0.1 to 172 s. This difference between daily PSD PDFs and the NLNM was 176 then averaged across each band to create basic seasonal noise level metrics. Since all sensors are 177 compared to the same baseline noise model, these differences can then be compared to one 178 another and provide an accurate average power, or power difference, of the noise for each day. 179 This analysis was performed on all three components of the four sensors in the study and the 180 results of the microseism and long period band are reported in Figure S1 of the electronic 181 supplement to this article and Figure 3 respectively.

182	It is well known that teleseismic body waves have a contribution to ambient seismic
183	background through extended coda and aftershock signals that confer small amplitude motion to
184	the surface over a long period of time, and it is possible that this phenomenon is measurable in
185	this analysis (Boué et al., 2013). Days on which a $M_W \ge 7$ earthquake occurred are indicated and
186	while every $M_{\rm W} \ge 7$ earthquake does not mark a day of higher than average noise, many high
187	noise days do line up with an $M_W \ge 7$ earthquake and we disregard these days to concentrate on
188	locally- or regionally-generated background power trends.

189 The vertical component is ubiquitously the lowest noise component usually with a 190 separation from the horizontals of at least 20 dB, while the noisier east and north components 191 overlap one another (Figure 3). Some of the distinct trends on the vertical component of Direct 192 Burial 2 may be due to the drift of the sensor's mass position, which can add long-period noise 193 on the vertical component of CMG-3T sensors. This prompts a mass re-center command from 194 the data logger and a corresponding abrupt decrease in vertical noise after the sensor settles. If a 195 gradual increase in vertical long-period noise follows the trend of vertical mass-position drift and 196 an abrupt decrease in vertical long-period noise coincides with a mass re-center and mass voltage decrease, then the long-period vertical noise is almost certainly related to mass position. Mass re-197 198 centers were triggered by the horizontals of Direct Burial 2 on 8 March and 10 June 2012, 199 coinciding with a drop in the vertical long-period noise of the station. An additional mass re-200 center on 1 August 2012 does not show a clear drop in long-period noise. 201 The horizontal components of all four sensors show a decrease in noise in the microseism 202 band from April through August in Figure S1 available in the electronic supplement to this 203 paper, reflective of a typical seasonal decrease in Northern Pacific storms during that time period

204 (e.g., Aster et al., 2008; Given, 1990; Hasselmann, 1963). The horizontal components of the

205 direct burials showed an average decrease of 3.6 dB from January-March to April-June on the 206 horizontal components compared with an average decrease of only 1.9 dB on the vault sensors. 207 On the long period band the two direct burial sensors display fairly consistent noise levels with a 208 decrease of noise from April to June on the horizontal components consistent with this scenario. 209 The vaults, however, show a general increase in noise beginning in April in the long period band, 210 which tapers off through August. On average the horizontal components of the vaults have 5.3 211 dB more noise from April to June than the direct burials at long periods. The source of this noise 212 is likely local environmental effects occurring in the spring months. Average maximum-213 minimum temperature differentials are highest during April, May, and June with a 36°F monthly 214 average differential during this time period, 4°F greater than the average temperature differential 215 of all other months (Arguez et al., 2012). The experimental site is also very near the Rio Grande, 216 with clay-rich alluvium and a variable and shallow water table. Discharge is mainly driven by 217 snowmelt and is recorded on two United States Geological Survey (USGS) water data sites near 218 the sensors, one 18.2 km directly north and one 3.7 km directly south. These sites show identical trends, with a relatively steady daily discharge of 700 ft^3/s from January through March. 219 220 disrupted on 4 April 2012 by the largest spike to over 2000 ft³/s followed by lesser spikes of 221 1500, 1000, and 700 ft³/s before decreasing to zero flow by the end of July (USGS New Mexico 222 Water Science Center National Water Information System, last accessed 19 February 2015). 223 During demobilization we observed evidence of repeated flooding from the interior floor of the 224 vaults, with water levels to within 15 cm of the top of the cement pier. Residue of previous 225 moisture beads on the interior top of the inner barrel of the vaults and moisture on the inside of 226 the open-cell foam was also found, but there was no evidence of water flowing in from the top of 227 the vault so we concluded that water must have entered through the base. The direct burial

sensors were above this inferred maximum water table. Repeated wetting and drying of the clay-

229 heavy sediment from changes in the average discharge of the Rio Grande could be responsible

for the increase in observed long-period noise observed on the vault sensors in the spring

months.

232 Magnitude Squared Coherence

233 A useful metric for intercomparing the similarity of signals at co-located seismic stations is to 234 calculate their coherency, a fundamental measure of how similar the phase and amplitude 235 structure of time series data are as a function of frequency. Values of coherency between two 236 time series range from near 0, indicating incoherence and 1 indicating perfect resemblance. The 237 complex coherency function is the cross-spectral power density function normalized by the 238 square root of the product of the power spectral density functions of the two time series to be 239 compared. The cross spectrum is the discrete Fourier transform of the cross correlation function 240 between two time series X and Y, where the cross correlation is:

241
$$R_{xy}(n) = \sum_{t=-\infty}^{\infty} X(t)Y(t-n)$$

and the cross spectrum is the Fourier transform of the cross correlation at a specific angular frequency ω :

244
$$P_{xy}(\omega) = \sum_{k=-\infty}^{\infty} R_{xy}(m) e^{-j\omega k}$$

245 The angular frequency ω can be converted to frequency f by the simple relation:

$$\omega = 2 * \pi * f$$

247 Magnitude squared coherence $C_{xy}(f)$ (MSC) is calculated in this study given by:

248
$$C_{xy}(f) = \frac{|P_{xy}(f)|^2}{P_{xx}(f)P_{yy}(f)}$$

where $P_{xy}(f)$ is the cross spectrum of the two equally sampled time series X and Y, and their 249 associated power spectral densities are noted by $P_{xx}(f)$ and $P_{yy}(f)$ respectively. MSC was 250 251 calculated for each hour of data recorded from January through August of 2012, using the 252 Welch's overlapped averaged periodogram method (Welch, 1967) with 1-hour windows, an 253 overlap of 30 minutes, and a standard Hamming window. With three components [BHE, BHN, 254 BHZ] and three station couplings [Vault 1 to Vault 2, Direct Burial 1 to Direct Burial 2, and 255 Vault 1 to Direct Burial 1] there were 9 interstation same-component comparisons. 256 Probability density functions of MSC were produced from the ensemble of hourly MSC 257 estimates for each station/channel comparison, for each month. The median of this PDF was then 258 evaluated as a representative MSC metric as a function of frequency (Figure 4). Figures for all 259 six station couplings of the monthly probability density functions for MSC are available in the

electronic supplement to this article and allow the temporal changes to be observed.

261 Effect of Orientation Error on MSC

262 Seismic sensors are typically installed with great precision and care, however orientation errors 263 occur in the field and can be up to 10° (Ekström and Busby, 2008). Sensor alignment errors can 264 add a significant amount of uncorrelated noise on the horizontal components, and slight 265 variations from the vertical allow noise to leak onto the vertical component particularly in the 266 microseism band (Ringler et al., 2011). In order to determine the relative orientation of the four 267 sensors in this study, we use a modified version of the coherency analysis method by Sleeman et 268 al. (2006). Vault 1 was used as the reference station and hourly data segments from 1 - 31 269 December 2011 were used to minimize both noise and temperature fluctuations (Ringler et al.,

270 2011). Data from the other vaults were rotated in the horizontal plane by increments of 0.1° until 271 the uncorrelated instrument and site noise in the microseism band [3 s to 30 s] median power 272 across all hourly segments was minimized for each individual sensor relative to the data 273 collected at Vault 1. The optimal rotations for each sensor in the clockwise direction relative to Vault 1 were -4.4°, 3.1°, and -2.4° for Vault 2, Direct Burial 1, and Direct Burial 2 respectively. 274 275 These orientation errors are similar to those found for many Advanced National Seismic System 276 stations prior to 2011, and are attributed to uncertainties arising from the use of a magnetic 277 compass to estimate horizontal orientation during sensor deployment (Ringler et al., 2013). The 278 remaining uncorrelated noise levels of the direct burial sensors were within a few decibels of the 279 vaults sensors, with an improvement over the vault sensors in the long periods of 10 seconds or 280 greater on the BHE component.

281 A significant amount of uncorrelated noise remained in the microseism band on the BHZ 282 component after the rotation in the horizontal plane, prompting a further rotation of the data to 283 minimize uncorrelated noise in the vertical plane using the same methodology as for the 284 horizontal components. The vertical rotation was done iteratively for dip and azimuth with 285 increments of 0.05° and 1° respectively. The rotations that minimized the uncorrelated 286 microseism noise were dips and azimuths of 0.2°/10°, 0.35°/175°, 0.4°/20°, and 0.3°/125° for the 287 Vault 1, Vault 2, Direct Burial 1, and Direct Burial 2 respectively. Any tilt noise from off-288 vertical alignment on this scale is negligible for the previous temporal noise analysis due to these 289 small angles. The uncorrelated noise that remained in the microseism was higher in the direct 290 burials and the noise that remained in the long periods was higher in the vaults. This incoherent 291 noise can come from additional sources other than the seismic wavefield alone, such as non-

seismic vault-localized ground strains in a relatively high noise site (Ringler et al., 2011). Other
results from this analysis are available in the electronic supplement to this article.

294 To ensure that our results are not affected by calculating the MSC of misaligned stations, 295 we tested the effect of orientation errors on MSC in a controlled way. We took the recorded data 296 of the BHE component of Vault 1 for the month of December 2011 and rotated it in the 297 horizontal plane by 1°, 2°, 3°, 4°, 5°, 10°, and 20° to simulate a misalignment. We took each 298 rotated recording and performed the same MSC analysis outlined previously on the original 299 Vault 1 data (Figure 5a-b). Calculating the coherence of the original signal to the slightly rotated 300 signal is a method that fully isolates the effects from a misaligned sensor. Misalignment of the 301 vertical plane was also tested for eastward dips of 0.2°, 0.4°, 0.8°, 1.6°, and 3.2° from the vertical 302 (Figure 5c-d). The effects in MSC for rotations of the horizontal plane from 1°-5° were minimal 303 with a maximum 0.01 decrease in MSC at frequencies of 0.3 and 2 Hz. Similarly, MSC was only 304 reduced by a maximum of ~ 0.015 with a 0.4° rotation of the vertical plane and only at the 305 longest frequencies. With larger rotations in both the horizontal and vertical plane, reductions of 306 MSC are more significant. The maximum orientation errors of the sensors are less than 5° in the 307 horizontal and 0.4° in the vertical, which equates to an indiscernible effect on MSC based on our 308 calculation above. We conclude that any uncorrected misalignment between sensors will not 309 impact the results of our calculations, but it should be a consideration for stations with larger 310 orientation errors.

311 Same-emplacement MSC

For all months the vertical components of the direct burial sensors are more consistently coherent with one another than any other component/station pair at longer periods to about 10 s, past which MSC drops off rapidly. Figure 4. This is in contrast to the vertical component of the

315 vaults, which are less consistently coherent but show higher levels of vertical component 316 coherence at longer periods to approximately 100 s. The direct burial vertical components also 317 show consistently higher MSC through the microseism band than the vaults. Both horizontal 318 components show comparable MSC between vault-vault and direct burial-direct burial 319 comparisons during all months at periods above 10 s, excluding a dip at 1 Hz. The 1 Hz 320 frequency is often associated with cultural noise, but this decrease in coherency may also be due 321 to wind noise (Wilson et al., 2002; Given, 1990). Temporal trends of MSC can be best observed 322 in the animated plots available in the electronic supplement to this article in Figures S2-S4. From 323 June to August, the coherence of direct burial-to-direct burial horizontal components stay steady 324 at 1 Hz while the vault-to-vault decrease in coherence. This difference could be due to the 325 additional 30+ cm of thermal mass above the direct buried sensors, providing more protection 326 from temperature changes in the summer months. At periods longer than 10 s, the coherence of 327 direct burial-to-direct burial horizontal components vary up to 0.3 in MSC while the vaults vary 328 up to 0.6 in MSC between January and June.

329 Dissimilar-emplacement MSC

330 When dissimilar emplacement type sensors are compared, we find that MSC is comparable to the 331 analysis done in the previous section with similar emplacement types at periods higher than 10 s 332 for all three components, Figure 4. The one exception is a drop around 1 s in MSC between 333 Vault 1 and Direct Burial 1 on the BHE component during August. On the vertical component at 334 periods longer than 50 s, the MSC is higher between Vault 1 and Direct Burial 1 than MSC 335 between Direct Burial 1 and Direct Burial 2. Thus, MSC in recorded signals can be lower 336 between two sensors with the same emplacement than two sensors with different emplacement in 337 this experiment.

338 Hourly MSC

339 Hourly MSC values were integrated across three frequency bands of 0 to 0.2 Hz, 0.2 to 5 Hz and 340 5 to 20 Hz to produce coherency metrics for the long period, microseism and short period bands, 341 Figure 6a. These integrated values were normalized by the ideal magnitude squared coherence to 342 compare the three bands to one another (Anderson et al., 2012). Coherence values of zero 343 indicate the data gaps on 17 January 2012. The short period and long period bands are much less 344 coherent than the microseism band, rarely dipping below 0.8 coherence in both vault-to-vault 345 and direct burial-to-direct burial over all months and all three components. Short period 346 coherence typically falls around 0.7 for all stations and all components. The BHE components 347 show the most temporal change in behavior in the long period band with a range in coherency of 348 1.0-0.6 coherence in January at both station pairings increasing to a range of 1.0-0.5 for direct 349 burial-direct burial and 1.0-0.3 for vault-vault coherence in June. These temporal changes in 350 coherence are well-above the uncorrelated noise of the sensors from misalignment, suggesting 351 that these sensors are recording a source of noise that changes in coherence temporally and is 352 recorded differently based on emplacement type.

353 To investigate temporal cycling of coherence, each month of hourly coherences was 354 converted to the frequency domain by taking the fast Fourier transform for each band and for all 355 six vault and direct burial station pairings (Figure 6b). A distinct diurnal cycle can be identified 356 at the 0-0.2 Hz band, evident in the sinusoidal pattern of the lowest frequency plots on both the 357 direct burial and vault in June, Figure 6a. The strongest cycle appears in the lowest frequency 358 band for all components, with the highest amplitude corresponding to a daily cycle on the east 359 component (Figure 6b). The vertical component (not shown) displays only a slight diurnal peak 360 on the lowest frequency band, less than one third the amplitude of the east component. The

amplitude of the daily cycle increases in the later months with the highest amplitude in August.
This daily cycle of long period noise could be explained by temperature and atmospheric
pressure, both diurnally varying factors known to cause uncorrelated noise on sensors (Custódio
et al., 2014; Sleeman and Melichar, 2012; Given, 1990). We believe that the decline in MSC of
the direct burial sites in June at long periods is due to wind driven spatially variable strain such
as ground tilt from tree roots. Relationships between environmental factors, emplacement type,
and noise require further analysis.

368 Signal-to-Noise (SNR)

369 The ratio of earthquake signal-to-noise (SNR) recorded by sensors is included in this study

370 because the most common use of PASSCAL seismic stations is to record earthquakes.

371 Teleseismic earthquakes were taken from the National Earthquake Information Center (NEIC)

372 global earthquake search and were selected for $M_W \ge 6$ and within distances of 30° to 90° from

the installation site. 23 teleseismic earthquakes representing a wide range of depths and faulting

374 styles were used in this analysis, evident from their global Centroid Moment Tensor mechanisms

375 (Ekström et al., 2012). Local earthquakes were taken from the New Mexico Tech Seismological

376 Observatory earthquake archives with distances up to 10 km from the site, representing

377 magnitudes of $1.1 \ge M_L \ge 0.1$. Six of these local earthquakes had a clear onset to distinguish the

378 event signal from the noise and were included in the analysis. The vertical waveforms were

379 filtered with a second-order, single-pass band-pass filter between 0.5 Hz and 3 Hz for teleseismic

events and a second-order, single-pass high-pass filter with a corner of 1 Hz for local events. *P*

381 wave arrivals were calculated to first-order using the TauP Toolkit (Crotwell et al., 1999) with

the IASP91 1D earth model (Kennett and Engdahl, 1991) and then were manually repicked. Two

383 windows of data were selected before and after the manually picked arrival for the noise and

384	signal windows, each with lengths of 40 seconds for teleseismic and 1 second for local
385	earthquakes. The signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) was defined as the ratio of the root-mean-square
386	(RMS) of the signal over the RMS of the noise.

387 All stations have a median SNR of 17 or above and a mean SNR of greater than 26 for 388 teleseismic earthquakes occurring between 1 January and 31 August 2014, recorded on the 389 vertical component (Table 2). Both mean and median are shown, but the median SNR is less 390 biased by the greater signal of the largest earthquakes. The differences of SNR between sensors 391 for these strong teleseisms, not surprisingly, are insignificant for the frequency range of 0.5 - 3392 Hz. Both direct burial stations had slightly higher SNR than both vault stations for all six of the 393 local earthquakes but the differences were not significant (Table 3). Recordings of the 394 teleseismic and local earthquakes can be found in Figure S7 and S8 available in the electronic 395 supplement to this paper.

396 Coherency of pre-event noise and coherency of earthquake signal between the four 397 sensors was compared using the largest event that occurred during the study period, the M_W 7.7 398 earthquake near Japan on 14 August 2012. The MSC, as defined in the previous section, was 399 taken on the pre-event noise and a signal window defined by 15 minutes of unfiltered data 400 windowed on either side of the P arrival, Figure 7. The signal portion is always more coherent 401 than the noise particularly at low frequencies of less than 0.1 Hz but also at high frequencies of 402 about 10 Hz. Signal coherency is of comparable magnitude between all stations pairings, with 403 the dissimilar pairing of Vault 1 and DB 1 showing the highest values. This suggests that 404 emplacement type does not have a detectable impact on the coherence of recorded events 405 between adjacent sensors.

407 **Conclusions**

408 We conclude that in this high-noise and soft-soil site broadband sensors with direct burial 409 emplacement have very similar data quality to co-located sensors with vault emplacement over 410 an eight-month record. Power spectral density (PSD) probability density function (PDF) analysis 411 shows that all components of directly buried sensors have comparable noise levels to sensors 412 emplaced in vaults. However, the sites show differing responses to seasonal changes that we 413 attribute to the soil column, with horizontal components of the direct burial sensors at long 414 periods showing less noise beginning in early April while the vault sensors show increased noise, 415 with these trends continuing into mid-July. This represents an improvement of 5.3 dB in mean 416 noise levels on horizontal components of the direct burial sensors over the vault sensors at long 417 periods during the spring transition, when these moist soils are undergoing vadose zone drying and/or shallow freeze thaw, and indicating that direct burial sensors were in this case more 418 419 resistant to tilt-coupled noise from these processes.

420 Diurnal cycling of magnitude squared coherence (MSC) is apparent in both vault and 421 direct burial comparisons, and is most obvious in the long period band of all components starting 422 in mid-July. August shows the widest range of MSC in both emplacement type comparisons, 423 cycling from 0.1 to 1. The MSC probability density functions show that the direct burial-to-direct 424 burial comparisons have a smaller range of coherence values around 1 Hz than the vault-to-vault 425 coherency. This could be explained by atmospheric pressure induced tilt known to produce 426 incoherent signals even at sensors co-located to within 1 meter, as well as increased incoherency 427 due to the vault void space (Ringler et al., 2011).

428 The signal-to-noise analysis shows similar values for high signal/noise teleseismic events 429 recorded at all four stations as well as for lower signal/noise local events down to $M_{\rm L}$ of 0.1.

430 Coherence of the largest recorded earthquake $[M_W 7.7]$ during the field experiment did not 431 appreciably differ between like and dislike emplacement types.

432 We compare data quality between vault-sited and shallow directly buried sensors to show 433 that the time and cost advantages of direct burial do not appreciably degrade data quality in a soft 434 soil environment. Noise recorded by vault-sited sensors is generally higher in amplitude during 435 the transition from spring to summer as compared to the direct burials. This increase is especially 436 evident on the tilt-coupled horizontal components at long periods between 20-170 s. Levels of 437 noise, and diurnal changes in the levels, are similar at all sensors from cultural activity, wind 438 noise, local tilting, and temperature fluctuations. We conclude that direct burial broadband 439 sensors in this environment were essentially equivalent in data quality to the shallow vaults, and 440 can be superior.

Although this was a closely monitored and maintained site, two directly buried sensors failed on separate occasions. While this does not necessarily indicate that these standard 3T were ill suited for the direct burial environment, we do not endorse directly burying broadband sensors that are not purpose-built for direct burial. This work thus suggests that the community would be well served by developing and deploying robust broadband sensors that can be routinely installed via direct burial using the methods discussed in this paper.

To improve data quality for similar portable broadband sites, we suggest employing a similar augured direct burial technique over vault installation to reduce the cargo load for each installation and to reduce noise from non-seismic sources. Augered posthole design has been utilized for seismic emplacement in icy environments, and includes an "all in one" datalogger and sensor design to further reduce installation materials (Bernsen et al., 2014). Streckeisen STS-4B and Trillium 120PH sensors installed in deeper posthole/borehole systems show

453 improvement over deeper Transportable Array style vaults in the long period band on the

454 horizontal components, and methods for securing the cables and sensors within these

455 configurations have been developed to further improve station performance (Frassetto et al.,

456 2014). These techniques will soon be deployed on a large scale in EarthScope USArray

457 Transportable Array activities in Alaska and Canada (Busby et al., 2013).

458

459 Data and Resources

460 All data used in this study can be obtained under the network code YE from the IRIS Data

461 Management Center at <u>www.iris.edu</u> [last accessed February 2015].

462

463 **Acknowledgements**

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597

598 List of Figure Captions

599 Figure 1 a) Cross-section schematic of vault and direct burial emplacement. b) Map view

600 schematic of experimental setup at the installation site, after Anderson et al. (2012).

601

Figure 2 a) Medians of PDFs for each station from January to August 2012. Vault stations are in

darker shades and direct burials are in lighter shades. Dashed lines are the NLNM and NHNM.

b) Deviation from the mean of the median noise levels from the four stations over the same time

605 period, with positive values for a higher power than the mean and negatives values for a lower

606 power than the mean.

607

Figure 3) Daily median noise levels at long periods (20-172 seconds) with respect to the NLNM

for eight months of study, 1 January through 31 August 2012, on all four stations. Vertical

610 dashed lines indicate days on which a $M_W \ge 7$ earthquake occurred. Vertical solid lines indicate a

611 mass re-center on Direct Burial 2.

612

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615 Vault 1 vs. Vault 2 and Direct Burial 1 vs. Vault 1.

616

617 Figure 5) Results of MSC analysis of original data and rotated data from the BHE component of

Vault 1 during the month of December 2011. a) PDF of magnitude squared coherence of Vault 1

619 station and Vault 1 station rotated by 20° in the horizontal plane. White lines show median PDF

620 of 1-20° rotations. b) Median probability density functions for 1°, 2°, 3°, 4°, 5°, 10°, and 20°

621 rotations in the horizontal plane. c) PDF of MSC of Vault 1 station and Vault 1 station with 3.2°

622 rotation of the vertical plane. White lines show median PDF of 0.2-3.2° rotations. d) Median

623 PDFs for 0.2°, 0.4°, 0.8°, 1.6°, and 3.2° rotations in the horizontal plane.

624

625 Figure 6 a) Hourly integrated and normalized MSC between stations of the same emplacement. 626 Four plots show the hourly MSC between direct burial stations and vault stations on the BHE 627 component for the representative months of January and June at three different frequency bands. 628 The diurnal behavior becomes more apparent in June, along with an overall decrease in 629 coherence in the vault stations. b) Eight months of hourly MSC values recorded on the BHE 630 component converted to the frequency domain. There is a strong diurnal signal on both sets of 631 stations in the long periods, increasing in amplitude through the year. Similar behavior is found 632 on the BHE and BHN components of all other pairings between direct burial and vault stations. 633

Figure 7) MSC of a M_W 7.7 earthquake near Japan on 14 August 2012 recorded on the vertical component with noise windows on the left and signal windows on the right.

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Figure 1 a) Cross-section schematic of vault and direct burial emplacement, after Anderson et al. (2012). b) Map view schematic of experimental setup at the installation site, after Anderson et al. (2012).



a)



b)

Figure 2 a) Medians of PDFs for each station from January to August 2012. Vault stations are in darker shades and direct burials are in lighter shades. Dashed lines are the NLNM and NHNM. b) Deviation from the mean of the median noise levels from the four stations over the same time period, with positive values for a higher power than the mean and negatives values for a lower power than the mean.





Figure 3) Daily median noise levels at long periods (20-172 seconds) with respect to the NLNM for eight months of study, 1 January through 31 August 2012, on all four stations. Vertical dashed lines indicate days on which a $M_W \ge 7$ earthquake occurred. Vertical solid lines indicate a mass recenter on Direct Burial 2.



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Figure 5) Results of MSC analysis of original data and rotated data from the BHE component of Vault 1 during the month of December 2011. a) PDF of magnitude squared coherence of Vault 1 station and Vault 1 station rotated by 20º in the horizontal plane. White lines show median PDF of 1-20° rotations. b) Median probability density functions for 1°, 2°, 3°, 4°, 5°, 10°, and 20° rotations in the horizontal plane. c) PDF of MSC of Vault 1 station and Vault 1 station with 3.2º rotation of the vertical plane. White lines show median PDF of 0.2-3.2º rotations. d) Median PDFs for 0.2^o, 0.4^o, 0.8^o, 1.6^o, and 3.2^o rotations in the horizontal plane.

b)




Figure 6 a) Hourly integrated and normalized MSC between stations of the same emplacement. Four plots show the hourly MSC between direct burial stations and vault stations on the BHE component for the representative months of January and June at three different frequency bands. The diurnal behavior becomes more apparent in June, along with an overall decrease in coherence in the vault stations. b) Eight months of hourly MSC values recorded on the BHE component converted to the frequency domain. There is a strong diurnal signal on both sets of stations in the long periods, increasing in amplitude through the year. Similar behavior is found on the BHE and BHN components of all other pairings between direct burial and vault stations.



Figure 7) MSC of a M_W 7.7 earthquake near Japan on 14 August 2012 recorded on the vertical component with noise windows on the left and signal windows on the right.

Station Name	Station Code	Thickness of Thermal Mass	Failure	Evidence of Water
Vault 1	DBT2	30 cm	None	10-13 cm mark on pier
Vault 2	DBT2A	30 cm	None	10 cm mark on pier
Direct Burial 1	DBT2.00	60 cm	11/18/12	Water in cable housing
Direct Burial 2	DBT2A.00	76 cm	9/22/12	None

Table 1) Station abbreviations used in the paper and their attributes during the experiment.

- 1 Table 2) Signal-to-noise ratios for all 23 $M_W \ge 6.0$ earthquakes at distances of 30° to 90°
- 2 from the stations.^{1,2}

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	1/23 6.1	1/30 6.4	3/5 6.1	3/14 6.9	3/14 6.1	3/25 7.1	4/17 6.7	5/14 6.2	5/25 6.1	5/28 6.7	6/4 6.3	6/4 6.3	6/7 6.0	6/7 6.1	6/19 6.0	6/24 6.0	7/8 6.0	7/20 6.0	8/2 6.1	8/10 6.2	8/14 7.7	8/27 7.3	8/30 6.8	Mean	Median
V1	6.7	29.8	6.9	50.1	10.0	19.8	13.4	18.3	12.9	5.8	38.7	22.0	5.4	27.3	26.3	21.5	9.8	6.8	12.4	26.1	191.3	33.6	12.2	26.4	18.3
V2	6.6	29.8	6.8	50.2	9.9	19.4	13.4	17.8	12.9	5.7	38.8	21.9	5.3	27.3	26.3	21.5	9.7	6.8	12.4	25.9	189.4	33.2	12.3	26.2	17.8
DB1	6.7	29.7	6.9	50.0	10.0	17.7	13.6	18.4	12.8	5.8	38.9	22.2	5.4	26.7	26.0	21.5	9.7	6.8	12.4	25.8	191.7	33.6	12.4	26.3	17.7
DB2	6.6	29.7	6.9	49.9	10.0	17.2	13.5	18.0	13.1	5.8	39.0	21.9	5.4	27.4	26.4	21.6	9.7	6.8	12.4	25.9	189.0	33.5	12.3	26.2	17.2

4

¹ The date of the earthquake is on top with the moment magnitude (M_W) on the bottom.

 2 V1 and V2 stand for Vault 1 and Vault 2. DB1 and DB2 stand for Direct Burial 1 and Direct Burial 2.

- 1 Table 3) Signal-to-noise ratios for six $1.1 \ge M_L \ge 0.1$ earthquakes at distances within 10 km
- 2 from the stations.^{1,2}

2 3

	4/26 0.3	5/3 0.2	6/4 0.7	6/4 1.1	6/10 0.9	8/04 0.1	Mean	Median
V1	3.179	2.03	1.81	1.72	2.66	2.59	2.33	2.31
V2	3.226	1.97	1.73	1.76	2.59	2.56	2.31	2.26
DB1	3.481	2.05	1.92	1.81	2.83	2.77	2.48	2.41
DB2	3.228	2.12	1.98	1.83	2.89	2.77	2.47	2.44

4

 1 The date of the earthquake is on top with the local magnitude from the New Mexico Tech Seismological Observatory (M_L) on the bottom.

 2 V1 and V2 stand for Vault 1 and Vault 2. DB1 and DB2 stand for Direct Burial 1 and Direct Burial 2.

Data quality of co-located portable broadband seismometers using direct burial and vault emplacement

Kasey Aderhold, Katherine E. Anderson, Angela M. Reusch, Mary C. Pfeifer, Richard Aster, and Tim Parker

Electronic Supplement:

The supplementary material for this paper contains figures of the daily median noise levels in the microseism band, monthly probability density functions for the magnitude squared coherence between the six station couplings (Direct Burial 1 to Direct Burial 2, Vault 1 to Direct Burial 1, Vault 1 to Direct Burial 2, Vault 1 to Vault 2, Vault 2 to Direct Burial 1, Vault 2 to Direct Burial 2) for all three components (BHE, BHN, BHZ), results of the coherency self-noise analysis, and the recordings of the teleseismic and local earthquakes used for the signal-to-noise analysis.

Figure S1) Daily median noise levels on the microseism band (2-20 seconds) with respect to the NLNM for eight months of study, 1 January through 31 August 2012, on all four stations. Vertical dashed lines indicate days on which a $M_W \ge 7$ earthquake occurred.

Figure S2) Probability density function of magnitude squared coherence on the BHZ component. Probability density function is taken of the hourly magnitude squared coherences for each month from January to August 2012 for each of the six station pairings (First column from top to bottom: Direct Burial 1 to Direct Burial 2, Vault 1 to Direct Burial 1, Vault 1 to Direct Burial 2; second column from top to bottom: Vault 1 to Vault 2, Vault 2 to Direct Burial 1, Vault 2 to Direct Burial 2). The x-axis is the log_{10} of frequency, the y-axis is magnitude squared coherence, and the black line is the median of the PDF.

Figure S3) Probability density function of magnitude squared coherence on the BHE component. Probability density function is taken of the hourly magnitude squared coherences for each month from January to August 2012 for each of the six station pairings (First column from top to bottom: Direct Burial 1 to Direct Burial 2, Vault 1 to Direct Burial 1, Vault 1 to Direct Burial 2; second column from top to bottom: Vault 1 to Vault 2, Vault 2 to Direct Burial 1, Vault 2 to Direct Burial 2). The x-axis is the log₁₀ of frequency, the y-axis is magnitude squared coherence, and the black line is the median of the PDF.

Figure S4) Probability density function of magnitude squared coherence on the BHN component. Probability density function is taken of the hourly magnitude squared coherences for each month from January to August 2012 for each of the six station pairings (First column from top to bottom: Direct Burial 1 to Direct Burial 2, Vault 1 to Direct Burial 1, Vault 1 to Direct Burial 2; second column from top to bottom: Vault 1 to Vault 2, Vault 2 to Direct Burial 1, Vault 2 to Direct Burial 2). The x-axis is the log₁₀ of frequency, the y-axis is magnitude squared coherence, and the black line is the median of the PDF.

Figure S5) Results from horizontal rotations in the North-East plane relative to Vault 1 to correct for orientation errors using recorded data from the entire month of December 2011. Rotations were 3.1° for Direct Burial 1, -2.4° for Direct Burial 2, and -4.4° for Vault 2 clockwise from

north. Median PSDs of all noise are in solid lines and median PSDs of uncorrelated installation/instrument noise are in dashed lines.

Figure S6) Results from dip and azimuth vertical rotation for the four stations to correct for nonparallel vertical components using recorded data from the entire month of December 2011. Rotations were 0.2°/10° for Vault 1, 0.35°/175° for Vault 2, 0.4°/20° for Direct Burial 1, and 0.3°/125° for Direct Burial 2 for dip and azimuth (clockwise from north) respectively. Median PSDs of all noise are in solid lines and median PSDs of uncorrelated installation/instrument noise are in dashed lines.

Figure S7) a) Normalized and band-pass filtered teleseismic seismograms on BHZ component at the four stations for all 23 $M_W \ge 6.0$ earthquakes between 30° and 90° distance from the study site. The black vertical line shows the *P* arrival picks with the noise window to the left and the signal window to the right, and date of the event on the bottom left. b) Map of gCMT (Esktröm et al., 2012) moment tensors for earthquake of $M_W \ge 6.0$ from January to August 2012. Black mechanisms were used for the signal to noise calculations and grey were not.

Figure S8) Normalized and high-pass filtered seismograms for the six $1.1 \ge M_L \ge 0.1$ local earthquakes recorded on the four stations. The handpicked first arrival is indicated by the solid line and the 1 second noise and signal windows are shown with the dashed lines. The date of the event is indicated in the lower left corner. For magnitudes, refer to Table 3 in the paper.































BHZ

























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